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SUBJECT: UNSC: HEARS BRAMMERTZ, ISSUES STATEMENT ON THIRD
UNIIIC INTERIM REPORT

¶1. In his March 16 briefing to the Security Council on the "Third report of the International Independent Investigation Commission (UNIIIC) established pursuant to Security Council resolutions 1595 (2005), 1636 (2005), and 1644 (2005)" that included both his open briefing and his comments in closed consultations that followed, UNIIIC head Serge Brammertz said that in the eight weeks since he assumed his responsibilities, his priority has been to address the UNIIIC's resource needs, to ensure the continuity of the investigation, to achieve progress in the investigation, to provide technical assistance to the Lebanese authorities, to make progress in obtaining Syrian cooperation and to manage the high level of expectations -- within and outside Lebanon -- that all these tasks will be completed quickly.

¶2. On organizational needs, Brammertz said that when he arrived in Beirut in January, he found only six of 48 authorized investigators on the job, most of the remainder having departed in late Fall in anticipation of the December expiration of the Commission's mandate. Saying that good people have good jobs and are generally unavailable for short-term assignments, he asked the Council members to help identify and make available qualified personnel to ensure medium-term staffing stability in the run-up to the June 15 expiration of the current mandate. Regarding the continuity of and progress in the investigation, Brammertz said that the investigation had entered a second phase, having moved from pure collection to preparation for a judicial process. He said that the Commission has developed new staffing patterns and methodological approaches to accommodate the change in focus and, because of such adjustments, has made (unspecified) progress in understanding the crime. He said that an agreement had been made with the GOL not to discuss details of lines of inquiry to safeguard the integrity of the proceedings. On the UNSCR 1644-mandated extension of assistance to Lebanese authorities on their investigation of 14 other possible cases of terrorism, the UNIIIC has provided, Brammertz said such assistance could prove valuable in finding links among the cases and with the assassination of Rafik Hariri. He said that in providing the assistance, the Commission had become aware of the structural deficiencies of Lebanese law enforcement and judicial institutions to deal with these cases.

¶3. On Syrian cooperation, Brammertz said that the Commission had reached an understanding with Syria on "practical modalities of cooperation." He said that the Commission's expectations vis-a-vis the Syrian authorities are high and that it has already prepared several new requests for cooperation. He said the coming weeks would prove whether requirements have been fulfilled and that he would report to the Council on the progress of such requests in the next report, or earlier if necessary. Brammertz said that managing expectations remains his key challenge, one that

means the Commission must strike a balance between an interest in transparency and the need to protect confidentiality of findings. He said he could not predict

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the outcome of the investigation and warned that it might require as long as two years to complete an investigation.

Security Council Reactions

14. Council members reacted positively to the report, though with varying degrees of enthusiasm. French PR de La Sabliere said he understood the nature of the interim report and the constraints which prevented Brammertz from providing the details of his work. He said France would support measures to improve the personnel situation. On Syrian cooperation, de La Sabliere commented that it was only because of the firm position taken by the Security Council that Syria is now beginning to understand that it must cooperate and said he expected Brammertz to report earlier than the next report if Syrian cooperation was not forthcoming as pledged. Ambassador Sanders, per Department guidance, commended Brammertz and the work of the Commission in providing technical assistance for the 14 other terrorist attacks, noted Syria's agreement to arrange meetings with the President and Vice President of Syria, and reminded the SARG that it must make all persons unconditionally available to the Commission. She said that on all procedures, Syria must cooperate in substance and form. UK DPR Thompson, noting the reference to Syrian cooperation, said that the Council would be waiting to see whether Syria followed up on its offer to cooperate.

15. Russian PR Denisov said Russia understood and supported Brammertz's concern with strengthening the UNIIIC staff in order to be achieve concrete results in the investigation. He said that the outcome of the investigation should be based only on the facts as developed by UNIIIC. He said that Syrian cooperation with the UNIIIC was critical as was mutual cooperation between all parties to the investigation. Qatari PR Al-Nasser characterized the report as "commendable" and without premature references to outcomes of the investigation. Commenting on the report's reference to the agreement between the UNIIIC and Syria on "operational modalities," Al-Nasser said he looked forward to further positive responses from Syria. Japanese PR Oshima, Chair of the UNSCR 1636 Sanctions Committee, reported that the Committee has finalized the text of the Committee guidelines.

SC Press Statement on Third Interim UNIIIC Report

16. Following the closed consultations discussion, the Council approved a French-circulated Press Statement to be read by Security Council President (Argentinean PR) Cesar Mayoral: Text follows:

The members of the Security Council received a briefing today from the Commissioner, Mr. Serge Brammertz, on the third interim report of the International Independent Investigation Commission on the assassination of former Prime Minister of Lebanon Rafik Hariri.

The members of the Security Council welcomed the report and commended Mr. Brammertz and his team for their outstanding professional work.

The members of the Security Council noted with satisfaction that the investigation into the terrorist attack has advanced further. They also welcomed the steps taken by the Commission to extend additional technical assistance to the Lebanese judicial and law enforcement agencies with regard to their investigation into other terrorist attacks that have occurred in Lebanon since October 2004. They commended the Commission and the Government of Lebanon for their excellent working relationship.

The members of the Security Council took positive note of the common understanding reached between the Commission and the Syrian authorities regarding Syria's required full and unconditional cooperation with the investigation on legal and operational matters. They look forward to its implementation consistent with Security Council resolutions 1595, 1636 and [S/1644](#).

Finally, the members of the Security Council reiterated their unwavering support for the Commission and its central role in identifying the perpetrators, organizers and sponsors of this heinous terrorist act so that they can be brought to justice.

They stand ready to assist the Commission as necessary.

End Text.

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